Claims

[c1] Apparatus comprising:

an interface which provides removable connection to a plurality of expansion devices;

an information storage unit for storing settings information which indicates whether the expansion devices connected to said interface are removable; and

a listing unit for listing the expansion devices removable from said interface, based on said settings information stored in said information storage unit;

said information storage unit and said listing unit together comprising an interface which allows expansion devices to be attached and detached.

[c2] The apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising a setting change unit for changing said settings information stored in said information storage unit, based on outside requests.

[c3] The apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said information storage unit is a non-volatile memory which stores information referenced by BIOS (basic input/output system).

[c4] Apparatus comprising:

an interface section having a plurality of interfaces, each interface providing removable connection to a plurality of expansion devices;

a listing section for displaying a list based on settings information which indicates whether to permit removal of an expansion device from each of said interfaces;

a specification acceptance section for accepting specification of a specific interface from among said interfaces contained in said list; and

an unloading section for unloading a driver for the expansion device connected to said specific interface to allow the expansion device to be removed;

said listing section and said specification acceptance section together comprising the plurality of interfaces which allow the expansion devices to be

attached and detached.

[c5] The apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein said listing section lists only the interfaces from which removal of expansion devices is permitted.

[c6] The apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein said specification acceptance section accepts only the specification of the interfaces from which removal of expansion devices is permitted.

[c7] The apparatus according to Claim 4, further comprising a choice acceptance section for accepting choices as to whether or not removal of the expansion device from each of the plurality of interfaces should be permitted.

[c8] A method comprising the steps of:

displaying an explicit list of removable expansion devices in response to a certain operation, based on an information list which indicates whether the expansion devices are removable from a computer device;

accepting specification of a specific expansion device from among the expansion devices listed explicitly; and

unloading said specified specific expansion device from a system of said computer device.

[c9] The method according to Claim 8, wherein said step of displaying said explicit list comprises steps in which:

an OS (Operating System) of said computer device makes an inquiry to a BIOS;

the BIOS replies as to whether or not each of the expansion devices is removable, with reference to the information list; and

the OS indicates a list of removable expansion devices explicitly based on a reply from the BIOS.

[c10] The method according to Claim 8, further comprising the steps of:

receiving, from outside, settings concerning whether the expansion devices are removable from said computer device and generating settings information based on the received settings; and

generating the information list with reference to said settings information

during system startup of said computer device.

[c11] The method according to Claim 10, wherein when the settings concerning whether or not the expansion devices are removable from said computer device are received from the outside, said step of generating settings information stores the settings information generated based on the received settings in a non-volatile memory which stores data referenced by a BIOS of said computer device.

[c12] A program product comprising:

a computer readable medium;

a computer executable program stored on said computer readable medium for execution on a computer device, said computer executable program being effective in executing the steps of:

detecting expansion devices connected to the computer device;

accepting specification as to whether or not removal of said detected expansion devices from the computer device is prohibited; and

displaying a list of expansion devices, excluding the expansion devices which are prohibited from being removed, when requested to display a list of the expansion devices connected to the computer device.

[c13] The program product according to Claim 12, wherein said process of accepting specification is executed if a certain operation is performed during system startup of the computer device.

[c14] The program product according to Claim 13, wherein said process of accepting specification stores information about said specification in a non-volatile memory which stores data referenced by a BIOS of the computer device.

[c15] The program product according to Claim 14, wherein said process of displaying a list comprises:

a process in which an OS of the computer device asks the BIOS for information needed to display said list;

a process in which the BIOS provides information as to whether each of the expansion devices is removable, with reference to the information

about said specification stored in said non-volatile memory; and

a process in which the OS displays a list of removable expansion devices based on the information provided by the BIOS.